10: Hilger E-5 (1946-1952) 1957
SG4 Araucanians SG4
Chile

Araucanians have never had any currency. Chilean currency is used today; in fact it has become a necessity. It is needed to buy from Chileans necessities not produced by the family, such as men's and boys' clothing—including hats and shoes, if there is sufficient money; calico for women's and girls' waists or entire dresses, if the native dress (kapam) is no longer worn by them; cloth for aprons; tools; dishes and cooking kettles; commercial dyes; sugar; occasionally wheat or flour. "Even the poor must sell some of their produce to buy these." If a large amount of chicha is needed, as at fiestas, baptisms, ruka building, and harvesting—where it is considered an essential—it, too, is bought from Chileans. 436

Money is obtained by supplying Chilean needs. Cattle and sheep, and, on occasions, hogs, oxen, and horses, are sold to non-Araucanian livestock dealers, mostly Chilean, who can be expected to come through the area at any time. In Alepúe area (1946) I was offered a good riding horse at the prevailing price, approximately 450 pesos ($15.00 in U. S. currency). Occasionally a family sells chickens; more often, if there is an opportunity, eggs. Eggs are used only as a subsidiary in cooking by Araucanians; chicken meat is the base for several dishes. 439

In Alepúe area a man delivered fish and other seafoods taken from the Pacific along a trade route he had established for himself, or he peddled them from house to house among Chileans in San José de Mariquina or Valdivia, or at fundos in the area. A few men dealt with Araucanian fish dealers on a commission basis; these dealers live in town and resell the fish to merchants in Valdivia. Fish sold are corbina, sierra, and robalo. Two edible algae taken from the Pacific are also marketable, namely luche and cochayuyo. A 35-year-old man and his 51-year-old sister pointed to a day's work, a 6-foot-high pile of standard-sized bundles of cochayuyo. Each bundle was 18 inches long and could be encircled by two hands. They intended to sell these in Valdivia the following day. Shellfish, called loko, mañilhue, and macha, and in July and August a special delicacy called arisos, have commercial value if they can be marketed within a day after they are collected.

The leaves of the fiocha were sold to Chileans by Alepúe men for rope manufacture, and nuts of the araucaria by Cofiaripe men, to be eaten. After a good harvest, many sell wheat. Some families sell dried peas and beans.

Woven articles are sold to Chilean stores or to non-Araucanians who order them; chief among the articles are ponchos, choapinos (saddle covers), lamas (throws), and blankets. Early one morning a 21-year-old man asked me to buy a lama—he was en route on horse-

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however, conversant with the literature of early travelers in South America say that trade was carried on with these peoples, especially the Guaraní; that the Guaraní, living in what is now southern Brazil and Paraguay, plied the tributaries to the delta of the La Plata River trading with the Araucanians who lived among them. That trade existed with peoples to the north, possibly the Quechua and Aymara, is conjectured, also, because recently airplane pilots who flew the length of the Andes in Argentina reported having observed what may have been a pre-Columbian trade route between the Araucanians as far south as Bariloche and the Aymara and Quechua in what is Peru and Bolivia today. In more recent times trade was carried on mainly across the Andes. 439

Passes across the Andes of the early days, still used by Araucanians today, are the Vuriloche Pass in the Bariloche area; the Tromen Pass from Junín de los Andes (Argentina) to Pucón (Chile); and one from Zapala area (Argentina) to El Arco (Chile). (Cf. also pp. 261-262 on passes through the Andes.) A footpath along the shores of Lake Quillen is said to be nearly a yard deep. The Vuriloche Pass, because of its low altitude, was the one generally used for the transfer of cattle. Kolupan had helped to drive cattle for sale from his home on the pampa through the passes of the Cordillera into Chile. Swamps in any pass were bridged by trees felled for the purpose. Old people had heard in their youth of a tunnel that led under the Andes. On the Argentine side it was entered at Lake Negro or Cajon Negro. "People have looked for it in recent times, but cannot find it." 439 491

Most frequently trading was by barter. Cattle sold to Araucanians or Whites in Chile, however, were paid for in silver coins known as pesos fuertos (the size of an American silver dollar). Since there was no immediate use for silver, except in making silver ornaments, the pesos fuertos were often either stored in caves or buried. One such cave is said to be on Estancia Huechahue. "Much of the silver could probably be found, but no one today knows where it was buried; the men who buried it have all died," said Kolupan. Both Araucanians and non-Araucanians noted that silver found in Chile in the early days was brought there in trade by the Quechua and the Aymara; that gold, which was used in trade much later than silver, was mined in what is now Argentina, one gold mine having existed in Chos Malál. 439

Although trade today is still often by barter, Argentine currency is a necessity. At the time the present study was being made, items bought with currency by Araucanians were clothing, sugar, yerba maté, flour, kitchen utensils, schoolbooks, wine, araucaria nuts, and dyes. Currency, too, is needed to pay dentist and doctor bills. Articles, 436

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436 either bartered or sold, were sheep, vegetables, wool, finely spun yarn, handwoven belts, blankets, ponchos, throws, rugs, and leaves of paico used by hotels in making a refreshing beverage. A sheep or a handwoven rug brought 50 pesos; an ox, 1,000 pesos; a 2-yard-long handwoven belt, 30 pesos. (The exchange was 16 pesos for one U. S. [427] dollar at the time.) Money was also obtained by renting horses to tourists, and by hauling lumber and wood by means of oxen. Families [464] also received cash or payment in kind for labor, such as farm work, herding cattle, and domestic work done for non-Araucanians in villages or on estancias. Several families migrated to Chinquilihuen each fall to gather araucaria nuts there; these sold for 50 centavos to 1 peso per kilo.

TRANSPORTATION

492 When informants were children, horses were already being used to transport both persons and luggage. (Cf. pp. 274-275 for manner of transporting babies and small children.) Adults used riding gear; children rode bareback. Most men, and an occasional woman, had riding gear ornamented in silver. A riding horse that had its tail trimmed off to the end of the bone was considered handsome, but in trade it was of less value than one with a complete tail. Whips made by braiding strands of leather were used by adults; children used twigs.

[493] The introduction of the oxcart was vividly recalled by the oldest informants. Formerly all oxcart wheels were cross sections of tree trunks; today wagon wheels are also used (pl. 75, *2*).

481 Snowshoes, known as chigua, were used when the snow was ankle deep; if less deep the ojota (tranu), the commonly worn foot covering, sufficed. Chigua were made by tying together the ends of a colihüe stalk to form an oval-shaped band and then weaving a network in it with strips of horsehide. The chigua was tied to the foot with two bands of woven material: one was brought over the instep and the other from behind the heel to the front of the ankle.

396 All persons, including children, crossed lakes and rivers in dugouts called wampu. The trunk of the tree known as rauli was preferred in making wampu. A spatula-shaped one in Museo Nahuel Huapi is 8½ feet long, 2 feet wide, 11 inches deep, and 1 inch thick. Men also crossed rivers or floated down streams that connected lakes on rafts called tanji. These were built on the spot and usually left on shore for anyone to use. Three or four trees, about a foot in diameter, were felled; and approximately 6 yards of the trunk of each laid side by side. Across these, close to the front ends and at right angles to them,